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ABSTRACT

This document describes: (1) the programs and environments that may be considered as general education environments for children with disabilities under the age of six, in addressing the least restrictive provisions of legislation; (2) the procedures to be followed in the process of developing individualized education program (IEP) goals and objectives; and (3) strategies addressing planning, funding, and contract development. Specific topics addressed include: types of general and special education programs and settings; IEP procedures; determination of present levels of educational performance; determination of annual goals and short-term instructional objectives; extent of participation in general education and special education and modifications for general education participation; special education instructional, support, and related services; monitoring the IEP in integrated placements; justification for instructional programs, support, and related services being recommended; and program standards for providing special education in community-based early childhood centers. Appendices provide additional information on: funding (including sources, limitations, and contract development); procedures for requesting reverse integration programs; feasibility of placement in community-based programs; and use of adjusted program reports in community-based centers. (DB)

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EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
IN THE
LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

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PROCEDURES FOR THE PROVISION OF
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All children qualifying for special education are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and must be provided with an individualized education program (IEP) that addresses the least restrictive environment (LRE) requirement. The multidisciplinary team, which includes the parents, must consider the child's individual needs in determining the environment(s) and services appropriate to support the achievement of identified educational goals. A continuum of options that includes both general and special education settings must be considered.

It is the responsibility of the local education agency (LEA) or the area education agency (AEA) to offer the child a program appropriate to meet the goals and objectives delineated in the IEP. It is the role of the IEP team to describe what is appropriate and to determine the program, services, and environment(s) that are least restrictive.

The U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provided the following clarifying note to the LRE regulations provision under Title 34 CFR Pt. 300*. In the second and third unnumbered paragraph of the note to §300.552, one finds:

> The requirements of §300.552, as well as the other requirements of §§300.550–300.556, apply to all preschool children with disabilities who are entitled to receive FAPE.
>
> Public agencies that provide preschool programs for nondisabled preschool children must ensure that the requirements of §300.552(c) are met. Public agencies that do not operate programs for nondisabled preschool children are not required to initiate such programs solely to satisfy the requirements regarding placement in the LRE embodied in §§300.550-300.556. For these public agencies, some alternative methods for meeting the requirements of §§300.550-300.556 include —
>
> (1) Providing opportunities for the participation (even part-time) of preschool children with disabilities in other preschool programs operated by public agencies (such as Head Start);
>
> (2) Placing children with disabilities in private preschool programs for nondisabled children or private school preschool programs that integrate children with disabilities and nondisabled children; and
>
> (3) Locating classes for preschool children with disabilities in regular elementary schools. In each case the public agency must ensure that each child's placement is in the LRE in which the unique needs of that child can be met, based upon the child's IEP, and meets all of the other requirements of §§300.340–300.350 and §§300.550–300.556.

These federal regulations from the *Individuals with Disabilities Act* (IDEA), as well as Iowa *Rules of Special Education*, clarify that the least restrictive environment requirements apply to all children who are entitled to a free appropriate public education, including infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The definition of LRE in the Iowa *Rules of Special Education*:

> *Least restrictive environment preferred.* Children requiring special education shall attend general education classes, participate in extracurricular activities and receive services in a general education setting to the extent appropriate. When integrated into general education, children requiring special education shall be educated in facilities serving nonhandicapped pupils of a corresponding age range, receive instructional time equivalent to pupils who are not handicapped, and, shall be furnished such supplemental equipment, facilities, instructional materials, remediation, specially designed interventions or other special education as may be necessary to enable them to perform satisfactorily in the appropriate, least restrictive environment of the school. Special education classes, facilities and services shall be provided outside the general education setting only to the extent that such other locations are necessary for the proper performance of medical or special education which requires personnel, equipment or facilities which cannot be accommodated within the general education setting. [§41.2(3)]**

The *Iowa Procedures for the Provision of Early Childhood Special Education Programs and Services in the Least Restrictive Environment* describes:

1. the programs and environments that may be considered as general education environments for children with disabilities under the age of six in addressing the LRE provision of the law;

2. the procedures to be followed in the process of developing individualized education program (IEP) goals and objectives; and

3. strategies addressing planning, funding, and contract development.

* In this document references to Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 300, March 1993, will be cited as §300.XXX. References to Education [281]—Chapter 41, Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) will be cited as §41.XX.

** References to *handicapped children* are found only in direct quotations of rules or regulations that were issued prior to October 30, 1990. *Preschool children with disabilities* refers to children below the age of six years. Children requiring special education below the age of six may be served by either an IEP or individualized family service plan (IFSP) as appropriate.

GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SETTINGS

As used in the Iowa *Rules of Special Education*, the term *general education* refers to educational environments, classes, and extracurricular activities for students without disabilities. Nondisabled children under the age of six do not have mandated general education programs and services. For preschool children with disabilities who are

entitled to special education programs and services, the general education or natural environment must be addressed to meet the LRE requirement in providing a free appropriate public education. The *general education* or *natural environment* for preschool children with disabilities is the setting where activities, instruction, and remediation naturally occur for children of similar age without disabilities.

The LRE requirement within the Iowa *Rules of Special Education* specifies that children receiving special education services shall participate in the general education setting to the extent appropriate. Examples of typical early childhood programs and settings that may be considered as general education programs and natural environments for young children are listed below. This list is not exhaustive nor intended to represent a hierarchy of options.

General Education Programs and Settings

1. **Child care provided in the family home or family child care home environment**
   Families and child care providers in the home setting may offer child care in the least restrictive environment, while providing a program and developmentally appropriate experiences with assistance from teachers, support staff, or both.

2. **Early childhood center-based programs operated by the local education agency or other publicly funded programs including LEA preschools, kindergartens, Chapter 1 classrooms, Head Start, and At-Risk programs**
   These early childhood programs primarily serve nondisabled children and are operated by the LEA or other agencies funded by federal or state dollars. No tuition is charged for participation in these programs.

3. **Community-based early childhood centers**
   Community-based early childhood (CBEC) centers are typically fee-based and may be nonprofit or for-profit organizations. These centers provide preschool programs or child care or both, and primarily serve nondisabled children.

4. **Activities in community settings**
   Early childhood activities in the community may include library story hour, YWCA programs, swimming programs, and play groups.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Special education programs and services for young children may be provided in a variety of environments. Determination of the least restrictive environment for a young child requiring special education is accomplished through the identification of the needs of the child and designing services in the general education setting or special education setting or both that will support the child's needs.

Necessary accommodations and support and related services must be identified to support learning within the integrated environment and facilitate interaction with nondisabled peers. Examples of accommodations include modifications in the environment (e.g., use of space, materials, and equipment) and instructional strategies (e.g., modeling, repeated practice, incidental teaching, and facilitated interaction).

Quality planning by the multidisciplinary team, including the parent, is essential in designing and implementing the ongoing interventions in integrated settings, serving children both with disabilities and without disabilities.

Meeting the least restrictive environment requirement which is appropriate for a young child is dependent on a planning process that delineates the child's unique needs and is not dependent on the services available. Accommodations and support to meet the learner's needs in integrated environments should facilitate regular and planned interaction between children with disabilities and nondisabled children.

The order in which these programs and environments have been listed is not intended to suggest a hierarchy of restrictiveness.

Special Education Programs and Services

1. **Special education instructional intervention in a center-based early childhood (CBEC) program**
   The child requiring special education attends a center-based early childhood program or community activity for young children and receives special education instruction and support and related services as described in the IEP or IFSP. Instructional services are provided and monitored on site by an early childhood special education professional licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners. The program may be a publicly funded early childhood center-based program or a fee-based early childhood program in the community. The agency responsible for providing special education services may contract with a fee-based community program. (See *Appendix A.*)

2. **Co-location**
   The child requiring special education participates in a program that combines the services of an early childhood special education (ECSE) classroom and a CBEC program or a publicly funded early childhood program. The programs are combined in one room or in close proximity to each other in order to promote the interaction of children with and children without disabilities.

3. **Reverse integration program**
   The child requiring special education attends an early childhood special education (ECSE) classroom that also enrolls children without disabilities. The reverse integration model is specifically designed to facilitate ongoing meaningful interaction among children. Reverse integration is considered one of the more restrictive integration models. (See *Appendix B.*)

4. **Self-contained early childhood special education program**
   The child requiring special education attends an ECSE classroom program for children with disabilities and receives special education instruction and support services as developed in the IEP or IFSP. The IEP or IFSP includes opportunities to participate in activities with nondisabled peers. Program models include:

   a. *Self-contained special class with little integration* serving up to 8 children with one ECSE teacher and one educational aide. This classroom serves children with mild and moderate disabilities (weighted 2.35).

b. *Self-contained special class* serving up to 5 children with severe disabilities (weighted 3.52) with one ECSE teacher and one educational aide.

c. *Self-contained special class with little integration* serving up to 8 children (each child weighted 3.52 will count as 2 students) that includes children with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities. This model requires one ECSE teacher and one educational aide.

5. Home instruction

The child requiring special education receives special education instruction and support services in the home setting, as described in the IEP or IFSP. Home instruction may be combined with other alternative placements for young children.

6. Dual programming

The IEP team may design a program that includes both center-based ECSE intervention and an integrated component, e.g., a child may attend both an ECSE classroom and a program for preschool children without disabilities. Intervention specific to the IEP goals must occur in both the special and general education environment.

Individualized Education Program Procedures

The development of an IEP with provisions for the least restrictive environment for a preschool child (3 to 6 years of age) must follow the same procedures and meet the same state and federal requirements established for school-age students. (See *Iowa IEP Resource Manual*, 1992.) There are some IEP procedures that require special attention to preschool issues and awareness of the unique needs of young children.

The following items are designed to be used with the directions given in the *Iowa IEP Resource Manual.*

The LRE provisions for a child under the age of three should be addressed in the IFSP or IEP as determined appropriate.

Present Levels of Educational Performance

For preschool age children, the present levels of educational performance (PLEP) section of the IEP should describe the child's developmental status and address how the child functions in familiar or natural environments for young children, e.g., home, preschool, child care, and kindergarten settings. Areas of functioning may include social interaction; communication with adults and peers; and ability to follow routines in preschool, home, or both environments. Needs in preschool domains should be considered, e.g., cognitive skills, self-help skills, motor skills, communication, and social skills. Family members should be involved in collecting information needed for the PLEP and for determining what environments and skills are relevant.

Annual Goals and Short-term Instructional Objectives

The team should define the child's specially designed instruction by outlining the goals and objectives. Upon consideration of the goals and objectives, the IEP team must identify the services and placement, or combination of placements, that will enable the child to achieve his or her goals and objectives. The IEP team must consider **all** options that would meet the needs of the child, not just options that are readily available in the community. The planning should address the services and the setting, or combination of settings that offer integration that is frequent, consistent, planned, and facilitated by deliberate instructional interventions.

The IEP should specify **where** goals and objectives will be implemented. The IEP for an integrated setting should emphasize behaviors for success in typical environments for young children. All goals and objectives on an IEP need not be implemented in the integrated or natural environment. Some goals and objectives may be implemented in a special education setting.

The IEP should specify **who** is responsible for implementing each objective. Some objectives may be implemented by special education instructional personnel or support staff, and other objectives may be implemented by the staff of the early childhood program. (See *Monitoring the Individualized Education Program in Integrated Placements* on page 9.) The objectives that are to be implemented by someone other than a licensed special education teacher or support staff member must be monitored by a licensed special education professional. The level or intensity of monitoring that will be provided should be clearly stated in the IEP.

Extent of Participation in General Education and Special Education and Modifications for General Education Participation

Teams are encouraged to ask the following questions.

1. When and where should the child participate with nondisabled peers? Who would be appropriate peers?

2. What intensity of services will be needed?

3. What strategies and accommodations will be needed to facilitate interaction and successful participation?

4. How will services be coordinated?

Once this information is determined, the IEP team will need to consider all options that have the potential for meeting the child's educational needs (as specified in the present levels of educational performance) and the goals and objectives. To determine which options are appropriate, the team should address these questions.

Of all possible options, which placement:

1. is most likely to develop the skills described in the IEP?

2. can demonstrate the feasibility of providing a developmentally appropriate educational program that can meet the child's needs as stated in the IEP?

3. is capable of accommodating this child's specific needs in an integrated setting with peers of similar age?

4. is most like the natural environment in which the child would participate if the child did not have special needs?

5. offers the greatest opportunity for interaction with children who do not have disabilities?

6. is most likely to increase independence?

7. is most likely to prepare the child for less restrictive placements in the future?

Having considered these questions, the team will address *Extent of Participation in General Education* on the IEP form. Here the team records the extent to which the pupil will be educated in the general educational program. [§300.346(a)(3)]

For a preschool child, the IEP should describe the special education services to be provided and list the activities, settings, and routines in which the child will participate in the general education or the natural environment.

The description of the program in which integration will occur should include:

1. type of program and location.

2. activities, routines, portions of the day, curriculum areas in which the child will participate (e.g., center time, free play, language lessons, story time, physical education, snack, lunch, etc.).

3. indication of the amount of time: the approximate number of hours or minutes per week or month or a percentage that indicates how much of the student's day or week is to be spent in that general education environment or activity. [§300, App. C, Question 52]

The IEP must list modifications needed to enable the child with disabilities to participate in the general education program and activities [§300, App. C, Question 48]. Examples of modifications include:

1. modifications to the general education curriculum and routines that will be necessary.

2. personnel assigned to assist in the integrated setting if needed.

3. positioning, assistive technology devices, and modifications to the facility, if needed.

Description of the Special Education Instructional, Support, and Related Services

The IEP team describes, on the IEP form, the instructional program the child will receive, keeping in mind the least restrictive environment provision. Multiple options for programs and services should be considered by the team. The IEP team may select one option or a combination of these options. It is important for the team to review and discuss all program options that are appropriate for the child. The options discussed and the reason for selecting the services to be provided should be documented on the IEP form under *Justification for Instructional and/or Support and Related Services Being Recommended.*

Both the Iowa *Rules of Special Education* and the *Code of Federal Regulations* state that all support and related services must be included on the IEP. §300, App. C, Question 44 states: "...the services must be listed in the IEP even if they are not directly available from the local agency, and must be provided by the agency through contract or other arrangements." Support and related services must be provided in the least restrictive educational environment as appropriate.

The IEP team may determine that the child's special education needs can be met by providing **instructional** services or **support** services or both in a community-based early childhood center. If participation in a CBEC is the special education instructional service, tuition and other actual costs must be provided at no cost to the parent. (See *Appendix A.*)

If the IEP team determines that participation in the CBEC setting is a special education **instructional** service, the IEP **must** be monitored by a licensed early childhood special education professional. Monitoring activities are described on page 9. The examples below describe three different situations that require IEPs to be monitored and suggestions for utilizing personnel. These examples are provided for clarification only and should **not** be considered as recommended or required amounts of time or schedules of service.

Example 1

The IEP team determines that the child has needs for instructional services that can be provided in a CBEC. Participation in the CBEC is considered as the special education placement and the IEP indicates that the licensed ECSE teacher will make monitoring contacts one time every other week unless there is need for more frequent interactions.

For placements in a CBEC for special education instructional and support services, a support service professional may be the primary person responsible for ongoing interventions, consultation, and monitoring of the IEP. In addition, a licensed ECSE professional must provide periodic monitoring of the instructional program as per the IEP.

Example 2

The present levels of educational performance for a child indicates significant needs in the area of communication. The IEP team determines that the child has needs for both instructional and support services. Because most of the goals and objectives are in the area of language, the speech-language pathologist (SLP) is designated by the IEP team to provide therapy to the child and consultation to the

CBEC staff. The SLP is the primary IEP monitor with an ECSE teacher providing monitoring and consultation no less than 4 times per year.

Education agencies are **not** required to fund placement in a CBEC for children who require **only support services** and who are not in need of instructional services. (See *Appendix A*.) IEPs for support services only are to be implemented and monitored by the appropriate support personnel.

Example 3

The IEP team determines that the child requires only support services from a speech-language pathologist. The child receives support services in the CBEC, and the SLP provides consultation to the CBEC staff. This is not considered to be a special education instructional placement. The education agency is not required to pay for tuition. The SLP is required to monitor the IEP.

The IEP form must describe each service, including the program model and type of service to be provided, e.g., special education instructional intervention in a center-based early childhood program, direct therapy, integrated therapy, or consultation. The IEP must list the titles of the licensed special education professionals responsible for providing instructional interventions, clarify the role of the IEP monitor, and specify support and related services to be provided. The IEP must describe the amount of time the child receives instructional and support services, e.g., participation in CBEC three hours per day, three days per week with consultation from the occupational therapist one time per week. The IEP must also describe the frequency of monitoring contacts.

An IEP team may determine that transportation to and from an integrated setting is required to provide a free appropriate public education. Transportation services required to meet the special education provisions must be listed on the IEP and be provided at no cost to the parent. If parents are to be reimbursed for transporting their child to the special education placement, they must be reimbursed for the actual cost.

Monitoring the Individualized Education Program in Integrated Placements

If goals and objectives will be implemented in an integrated setting by a staff member who does not have a special education license, certificate, or letter of authorization, a special education teacher or support professional with the appropriate licensure must be assigned to monitor the IEP.

Monitoring of the IEP **must** include these activities:

1. participation in the development and subsequent revisions of the IEP.
2. collection and interpretation of formal and informal data to determine whether goals and objectives are being met.
3. on-site observation of the CBEC setting to determine that the conditions of contract between the education agency and the CBEC continue to be met.
4. evaluation of pupil outcomes.

The person who monitors the IEP should:

1. design instructional or therapeutic strategies or both, based on the IEP.
2. provide or assist staff in securing training required to implement the IEP.
3. coordinate teaming activities with CBEC and ECSE personnel.
4. assist with coordinating parent activities.

On-site monitoring of the IEP should be scheduled often enough to ensure the provision of a quality special education program. The schedule for monitoring the IEP should be established by the IEP team. In determining the frequency of monitoring contacts, consideration should be given to the expertise of the CBEC staff responsible for implementing the child's program, needs of the child, the progress being made toward meeting the instructional goals and objectives, the number of days per week the child is attending the CBEC, and the analysis of the overall appropriateness of the program in meeting the needs of the child.

Justification for Instructional Programs, Support, and Related Services Being Recommended

This section of the IEP must address why the team chose the particular programs or support and related services, or both. Information must be included which explains why the identified option is appropriate and provides the least restrictive environment. If one or more of the following situations exists, the IEP team must address them in this section:

1. The child's goals and objectives cannot be achieved in the natural or general education setting.
2. The chosen setting places the child with children who are not age appropriate.

The appropriateness of the age range is determined by the IEP team. The ages of the peers would be considered to be in the appropriate range if social interaction and other IEP objectives can be addressed through interaction with that age group.

PROGRAM STANDARDS FOR PROVIDING SPECIAL EDUCATION IN COMMUNITY-BASED EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS

Agencies providing special education services are authorized to contract with private agencies in order to provide special education to preschool children with disabilities.

To consider a community-based early childhood center as a publicly funded special education placement option, the IEP team must define the individualized intervention in the general education setting that will meet the special education goals and objectives of the child. The accommodations and specialized instructional programs or support services necessary to meet the individual needs of the child should be carefully defined to

assure compliance by all involved in implementing the IEP. The responsibility to assure that the child receives an appropriate program remains with the assigned special education staff.

A school district or area education agency may contract with, or make payments to, other public or private schools and agencies approved by the AEA director of special education. Contractees must comply with the conditions and standards prescribed by the Iowa Department of Human Services and the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education.

1. No child may be placed by the LEA or AEA in a private preschool or child care program unless the facility has been approved and licensed by the Iowa Department of Human Services. Requirements are described in *Child Day Care Centers and Preschool Licensing Standards and Procedures.*

2. In order for a community-based early childhood center to be approved to contract with the LEA or AEA, the facility must:

    a. complete the Feasibility Review Process. *The Questionnaire for Determining the Feasibility of Special Education Placements in Community-Based Early Childhood Programs* (see *Appendix C*) or an equivalent review must be completed for each child for which there is a contract. The CBEC staff, the appropriate AEA or LEA personnel, and the parent must agree that it is feasible for the center to provide the instruction and accommodations listed on the IEP. The director of special education makes the determination that a contract can be developed.

    b. meet the special education personnel standards. The CBEC must employ one or more staff members that hold one of the following teaching licenses issued by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners.

        PreK-K classroom teaching license
        PreK-3rd grade classroom teaching license
        Early childhood special education teaching license

        If an AEA or LEA determines that a CBEC meets the standards described in the Feasibility Review Process, but the CBEC does not employ a teacher holding one of the required licenses, an Adjusted Program Report (APR) may be filed. The APR is to be used only when other options have been explored, and no program meeting all requirements is available to meet the needs of the individual student requiring this program. (See *Appendix D.*)

    c. enter into a contractual agreement to provide services. A written contract is developed to specify duration and frequency of student participation, tuition rates, and availability of staff. (See *Appendix A.*)

    d. meet the conditions for use of public funds in private facilities. (See *Private Facilities* on page 15.)

    e. be subject to audit to demonstrate that funds charged reflect actual costs of serving the student.

APPENDIX A

FUNDING

When the IEP team determines that the child's special education services are to be provided in an early childhood setting, the special education program must be provided at no cost to the parents.

Costs for integration depend on what is included on the IEP. In most situations, services that will require special education funding include:

1. special education instruction and monitoring of the IEP in the community-based early childhood centers by a licensed early childhood special education professional.

2. special education support services, e.g., occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language therapy.

3. tuition costs of CBEC for providing special education instruction.

4. transportation to the CBEC site and return.

Many program alternatives do not require special funding mechanisms to support integration in community early childhood programs. For example, Head Start, At-Risk, kindergarten, Chapter 1, and co-location programs typically do not require tuition payment or interagency contracts to support the integration of children with disabilities. These integration opportunities can usually be funded through existing structures.

In some situations, providing integration with nondisabled peers may be appropriately provided by participation in a fee-based, community-based early childhood center. A child requiring special education may participate in **a fee-based community-based early childhood center** in one of the following alternatives:

1. **Nonaffiliated Placements:** Parents or other agencies may arrange participation in CBEC programs without creating an affiliation with the AEA or LEA. This type of attendance does not require IEP monitoring, but technical assistance **may** be provided if requested by the parents and CBEC director. The child's IEP or IFSP does **not** list participation in this setting as a placement or special education service. Transportation is **not** provided. **No** special education funding is provided by the AEA or LEA.

2. **Agency-Affiliated Placement:** Agencies other than the public schools (e.g., Department of Human Services, service groups) may fund attendance in the CBEC. The LEA or AEA, or both, may provide technical assistance, materials, transportation, and assistive technology devices that enable the child with special needs to participate. For participation in an integrated setting to be considered as the special education intervention, a special education instructional service must be listed on the IEP or IFSP.

3. **Placement Funded as Special Education Intervention:** An IEP team may determine that the appropriate general education setting or natural environment for a preschool child requiring special education is in a fee-based community-based

preschool setting. If the IEP team determines that a CBEC is a special education placement, all services described on the IEP must be provided at no cost to the parents. An IEP team may determine that transportation to and from an integrated setting is required to provide a free appropriate public education. If transportation is to be provided by the AEA or LEA, it must be decided by the IEP team and noted on the child's IEP.

Actual costs to attend such programs may be funded through the utilization of special education funds. Fee-based community providers may include the following in their charges to the district or AEA:

a. tuition (rates may be adjusted to reflect actual costs to provide appropriate services to the special education student).

b. funding for substitutes or overtime to enable personnel to attend staffings, parent conferences, and staff development activities that are specific to the needs of special education students.

c. transporting children to and from integrated settings.

Other expenditures may include:

a. expenditures for assistive technology devices specified on the IEP.

b. additional personnel required to maintain the child with a disability in the CBEC as specified in the IEP, e.g., aides assigned to assist child in CBEC.

c. special education personnel to provide and monitor services as required by the IEP.

Sources of Special Education Funding

Special education instructional and support funds may be used to provide integrated ECSE programs and services.

Weighted special education funds may be used to fund:

1. tuition to community-based preschools;

2. student transportation to and from appropriate program required to enable the child to participate in special education;

3. assistive technology devices and assistive technology services needed to enable the child to participate in special education;

4. ECSE teachers to monitor the IEP, provide follow-up, or team teach; instructional aides; and substitute teachers (to enable the CBEC staff to attend staffings, parent conferences and prescribed staff development activities); and

5. technical assistance and training for the child's family, and individuals who provide services to the child with a disability

The following special education weightings may be used to fund placements and services as described in an IEP:

Supplemental assistance (RO)	.68
Full time instructional (CC)	2.35
Part time instructional (CC)	1.68
Full time instructional (SC)	3.52
Part time instructional (SC)	2.26

If the IEP team determines that a child requires special education instructional services in a CBEC program and no other services, a weighting of .68 (supplemental assistance, RO) may be used to fund the actual costs of the CBEC placement.

The director of special education, or designee, will assign the weighting needed to support the appropriate program as defined by the IEP.

Federal funds from the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), Part B, Section 619 (Preschool Grant) may be used to fund:

1. tuition to community-based preschools;
2. student transportation to and from the appropriate program required to enable the child to participate in special education;
3. assistive technology devices needed to enable the child to participate in special education;
4. LRE facilitators, ECSE consultants, itinerant teachers, and support staff.
5. staff development; and
6. pilot projects, including demonstration classrooms and innovative practices.

Twenty hours or more of **instruction** must be received per week in order to be considered full time. The total hours of participation in both the general education setting and in the special education setting, as described in the IEP, are counted in determining the number of hours of instruction. For example, a child receiving services in a CBEC and ECSE totaling more than 20 hours of programming per week may be weighted full time.

Funding Limitations

Child Care

Local districts and area education agencies are not responsible for providing child care as part of a child's free appropriate public education. IEP teams will be responsible for differentiating between an IEP driven integrated early childhood special education service and the provision of day care or child care. IEP goals and objectives must stipulate the strategies and activities to be implemented in the integrated setting. The CBEC program staff and the IEP team should conduct a detailed analysis of the routines and activities being implemented in the integrated setting, and determine the specific portions of the CBEC schedule that will enable the child to work on IEP objectives.

The contract with the CBEC and the child's IEP must specify both the schedule for participation on goals and objectives and the amount of time that services will be provided by the LEA or AEA. Parents or other agencies may choose to pay for service at a CBEC beyond those hours funded by the LEA or AEA.

Nonpublic Schools

Agencies shall not use public funds to support special education placements in nonpublic schools. Nonpublic schools are listed in the *Iowa Educational Directory* (available from the Iowa Department of Education). Education agencies are not required to pay tuition for preschool children with disabilities to receive special education in nonpublic school programs. Special education instructional and support services shall be made available to children attending nonpublic schools in the same manner and the same extent that they are provided to public school students. However, the services that are made available shall be provided on neutral sites, or in mobile units located off the nonpublic school premises as determined by the boards of the school districts and area education agencies providing the services. [Reference: Senate File 206, May 5, 1993 (amending §256.12(2), Iowa Code).] The IEP should clearly outline the special education instructional or support services that will be made available in a neutral site. Recommended participation for the purposes of providing integrated special education services in nonpublic schools cannot be listed on the IEP.

Private or public preschools may be used as a special education placement if they meet all requirements and are operated by a program or agency other than those nonpublic schools listed in the *Iowa Educational Directory*.

Private Facilities

Agencies shall not use public funds to support special education placements in community-based early childhood programs located in private facilities unless the program is able to meet the following conditions:

1. the program maintains a nonsectarian board of directors;
2. the program is separately incorporated from any religious institution;
3. all proceeds and debts are the property of that corporation;
4. the program pays reasonable rent;
5. the facility does not display religious symbols; and
6. no part of the program's curriculum is religious in nature.

A signed contract or cooperative agreement should document these conditions in writing.

CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT

Individuals from the AEA or LEA and the community-based early childhood program, with authority to fund and approve integrated placements, should meet to develop a written interagency contract. The AEA or LEA administrator or designee is responsible for negotiating the contract with the CBEC. Prior to finalizing a contract, the child's needs and the IEP should be reviewed. The purpose of the meeting is to:

1. review the IEP goals and objectives to determine whether the center can provide the necessary setting, curriculum modifications, accommodations, and personnel to meet the child's needs.

2. determine the types of support the center needs and is willing to receive from the LEA or AEA.

3. discuss procedures for the annual review. The review process may be initiated at any time, in the event that concerns are registered by the parent, CBEC, or special education personnel.

4. discuss expectations of the LEA or AEA, parents, and CBEC.

5. inform all parties that if the CBEC cannot provide an appropriate program for the child or if the child no longer qualifies for special education services, the contract will be discontinued.

The **components of the contract** are as follows:

1. verification that the site holds a current Department of Human Services license to operate a child-care center.

2. verification that the *Questionnaire for Determining the Feasibility of Special Education Placements in Community-Based Early Childhood Programs* has been completed, and the appropriate LEA or AEA administrator has determined that the site meets the criteria for use as a special education placement.

3. documentation of the commitment being made by **all** involved parties (e.g., the local education agency, the area education agency, and the community-based early childhood program.

4. assurances that provisions will be made as needed to accommodate the child's special needs. Examples of areas to be addressed are as follows:

    a. frequency, degree, and duration of services to be provided and other areas to be coordinated with special education instructional or support staff.

    b. willingness to perform strategies and methods needed to implement the IEP goals and objectives and to facilitate social interaction.

    c. commitment to participate in training regarding strategies, methods, and accommodations that will meet the needs of the child with disabilities.

d. need for the measurement of child outcomes, and methods for documenting the progress of the child at various junctures of participation in the program.

5. assurances that opportunities for parent involvement will be provided in areas such as:

   a. staffings and parent conferences.

   b. visitation, observation, and participation in parent groups, as appropriate.

6. tuition specifications:

   a. tuition rates for time enrolled and actual costs for additional expenses.

   b. agency that will pay tuition.

   c. schedule for payment.

   d. schedule for frequency and duration of services.

7. emergency procedures: The special education personnel, parents, CBEC personnel, and health care facilitator, if needed, should review the emergency procedures in place at the CBEC center. If the child with a disability has a physical disability, medical condition, or unique needs that may have implications in an emergency, an individualized written plan for emergency procedures **must** be developed. The plan should identify reasonable and proper actions to be taken in an emergency, and who is responsible for implementing the procedures. An emergency plan should include:

   a. a protocol for managing child-specific health emergencies, e.g., personnel should be able to identify specific signs of distress.

   b. designated personnel in the CBEC setting who have been trained to deal with the emergency. Identify prepared backup personnel that will respond in the absence of designated personnel.

   c. designated personnel in the community who have been notified that the child with health care needs is attending the school, e.g., emergency medical technicians, fire and police departments, utilities, hospitals, and ambulances.

   d. a plan for any special needs required for transportation to a hospital.

   e. a summary of the child's medical or physical condition and needs should be on file at the local hospital emergency room.

   f. procedures for maintaining a written record following the emergency, including observations, actions, and time.

   g. a method of alerting the staff that there is an emergency situation in the building.

h. a method for alerting children with sensory impairments that there is an emergency in the building, e.g., fire alarm provisions for hearing impaired children, or someone designated to evacuate the child.

i. a plan on how to contact emergency personnel, the family, and health care providers. Emergency phone numbers should be posted.

j. a procedure for maintaining an emergency card that includes: parent or guardian signature; telephone numbers of parent or guardian during the day; telephone numbers of other local persons if parents or guardian cannot be reached; name and telephone number of local physician, local hospital preference; health concerns and allergies.

Emergency training procedures must be defined in writing. Training should prepare staff to implement reasonable and proper procedures. The training plan should specify who is responsible for implementing emergency procedures and conducting training activities, timelines for training, and the schedule for reviewing and updating training. The training plan should include procedures for training new staff and substitute staff members.

The contract must specify who is responsible for documenting that the emergency plan is in place and training has been provided to the appropriate community-based personnel.

8. assurances that, if public funds are used to provide special education to children in community-based early childhood programs located in *private facilities*, specific conditions are met. (See *Private Facilities* on page 15.)

APPENDIX B

PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING TO IMPLEMENT EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION REVERSE INTEGRATION PROGRAMS

A reverse integration program enrolls children without disabilities in an early childhood special education classroom for the purpose of providing ongoing meaningful interaction among children with disabilities and children without disabilities.

Reverse integration may be one of several community options for integrating children. Careful planning should take place to make sure that all options are considered before initiating a reverse integration model. **Reverse integration is considered one of the more restrictive integration models.**

Current rules of special education and funding practices do not provide a mechanism for adding nondisabled children in the classroom. Following are procedures developed by the Bureau of Special Education for the operation of reverse integration models on a pilot basis.

1. The number of children with disabilities should not exceed the number of children without disabilities.

2. If total class size (**both** disabled and nondisabled) exceeds 12 an additional aide **shall** be added. The integrated ECSE class with more than 12 children must have one teacher and two aides. When the 7th child with disabilities is added another child without disabilities should be enrolled to maintain the appropriate ratio and a second aide assigned.

3. If a classroom serves a child weighted 3.52, that child will be counted as 2 children for determining class ratios. For the purpose of maintaining a balance of children with disabilities and nondisabled peers, the 3.52 child may be considered as one child.

4. To provide continuity, the same children without disabilities should be attending the ECSE classroom at least two days a week to provide for regular and frequent contact for the children.

5. A reverse integration pilot site must be able to demonstrate that strategies and routines are being implemented to facilitate meaningful interaction of the children.

Guidelines for Funding Reverse Integration Pilot Models

The following points regarding funding are offered as clarification for local education agencies (LEAs) and area education agencies (AEAs) implementing reverse integration programs.

1. LEAs or AEAs **may** charge tuition for children without disabilities. The amount and mechanisms for collection are to be locally determined.

2. LEAs or AEAs may **not** use special education funds to transport children without disabilities. Districts may choose to transport children without disabilities using funding sources other than special education funds.

3. LEAs or AEAs **may** use special education funds to hire the additional aide to enable them to implement integration as a component of the special education program.

4. In the event that an additional aide is already employed to meet the needs of children with severe disabilities, that aide may be considered to be the third staff member required to implement reverse integration if the total class size exceeds 12. Consideration must be made as to whether it is realistic for one person to perform the role of supporting the child with severe disabilities and meeting the needs of the additional nondisabled peers.

Prior to implementation, pilot sites are requested to provide feedback on the attached form to the Bureau of Special Education addressing the following variables: class size, ratios, funding variables, and the replicability of curricula and instructional procedures for facilitating interaction.

Reverse integration is one of several options for integrating children that may be available in a community.

For further information on the least restrictive environment options for preschool children contact your AEA Early Childhood Special Education Supervisor or the Early Childhood Special Education Consultant or Technical Assistance Facilitator at the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education (515/281-3176).

Intent to Serve as an Early Childhood Special Education Reverse Integration Pilot Program

District:	**AEA:**
ECSE Teacher:	**Principal:**
Building Address:	**Phone:**

Please complete the following:

_____Number of children with disabilities
_____Number of children without disabilities
_____Number of aides assigned

Schedule for participation of children without disabilities:

Identify resources and personnel that will be providing assistance to plan and implement this model:

List or describe curricula that will be implemented (example, Learning Experiences: An Alternative Program for Preschoolers and Parents (LEAP) integration model):

Is the district or AEA implementing other preschool integration models? Yes/No

If yes, list other models in place:

For what reasons did the AEA or district choose to serve as a reverse integration pilot?

Is the district charging tuition for children without disabilities? ____ Yes ____No

How much per month?_____week?_____or day?_____

Return to: Joan Turner Clary, Consultant
Bureau of Special Education
Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

APPENDIX C

PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING FEASIBILITY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS IN COMMUNITY-BASED EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Preschool children with disabilities may be placed in a community-based early childhood program (CBEC), if the IEP team determines that a community-based program is the appropriate service to meet the child's educational needs.

The following process is designed to determine whether it is feasible for the CBEC to provide an appropriate, quality educational program and meet the individual child's needs as identified in the individualized education program (IEP). The local education agency (LEA) or area education agency (AEA) may use special education funds to pay for tuition and other expenses incurred by the CBEC to meet the requirements of the IEP, if the CBEC has been found to be a feasible environment to implement the IEP. **The feasibility review process should be conducted on an individual basis for each child being recommended for special education placement in a community-based early childhood program by the local district or area education agency.**

The IEP team, including the parent, discuss the child's present levels of performance and need for special education services. The team should consider all appropriate options.

After there has been a determination that a child is in need of educational services in a community-based model, the AEA/LEA should conduct a feasibility review. The feasibility review should begin with confirmation that the CBEC is currently in compliance with Iowa Department of Human Services child care licensing regulations. An initial interview with the CBEC director or representative is conducted to determine that the staff of the CBEC is willing to participate in a feasibility review and work with the special education staff and family to provide an appropriate program. The feasibility review process includes:

1. an interview of the CBEC staff.
2. visitation of the facility by the family and consideration of their input.
3. observation of the program using the Feasibility Questionnaire.
4. analysis of the interview and observation findings by a team including LEA/AEA administrator(s) and ECSE personnel.
5. determination whether the site may be used as a special education placement for the child in question.

There is not a score or minimum rating for determining whether the program can feasibly implement an IEP and provide the program and services being considered. The team should form a recommendation that the program can or cannot feasibly provide the program and services, based on careful consideration of each item on the questionnaire and the overall impressions of the team. The director of special education or his/her designee is responsible for developing a written contract for utilization of special

education funds to provide special education services in the program. (See *Contract Development* on page 16.)

If it is determined at the annual review that the placement in the CBEC is to be continued, the feasibility process should be repeated to assure that the current setting is still appropriate. The Questionnaire should be updated and then reviewed by the director of special education prior to completing the contract for the future year.

The first section of the feasibility questionnaire includes items that address general characteristics and fundamental components of the program. This section should be completed for each feasibility review. The second section offers items that consider aspects of the program that are related to the IEP. Items are clustered into domains that are frequently identified as IEP goals.

Many of the descriptors in this questionnaire are from the *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs* (1991). The feasibility review process is designed to determine appropriateness relevant to the implementation of the IEP and special education needs of an individual child. Participation in this process should not be interpreted to be National Academy of Early Childhood Programs accreditation or self-study. A copy of *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs* (1991) is available for purchase through NAEYC, 1834 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20009 or by calling 800-424-2460.

Questionnaire for Determining the Feasibility of Special Education Placements in Community-Based Early Childhood Programs

Name of program: **Program director:**	**Name of child:**
Address:	**Date of birth:**
School district/AEA:	**Dates of observation:**
Phone:	**Special Education Team Members:**

This form is to help you observe an early childhood program in order to determine whether it is feasible for the program to implement an individualized education program (IEP) and to assist in making the determination that the program can be considered as a special education placement for an individual child.

It is recommended that one or more representatives of the school district or AEA observe the program and interview program director and staff prior to completing this form.

Rate each item listed next to a box using the following symbols:

- \+ **Fully met**: The criterion is completely met. You observe a great deal of evidence that this statement accurately describes the program throughout the day. The behavior happens most of the time.
- ± **Partially met:** The criterion is partially met. You observe some evidence that this statement accurately describes the program. The behavior happens some of the time.
- – **Not met:** The criterion is not met. You observe little evidence that this statement accurately describes the program. The behavior happens rarely or seldom.

Section I: General Characteristics. Complete all items in this section.

Section II: IEP Goal Areas. Complete each goal area included on the child's IEP.

SECTION I: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

❑ **Program is licensed by Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS).**

- Licensure indicates compliance with center licensing laws and standards for administration, records, health and safety policies, personnel, physical facilities, food services, activity program requirements, parental participation, confidential information, mandatory reporting of child abuse. [References: Chapter 237A, Child Day Care Facilities, Iowa Code, 1993 and Human Services [441]—Chapter 109, Child Care Centers IAC, 3/1/92.] See *The Iowa Department of Human Services Child Day Care Centers and Preschool Licensing Standards and Procedures* for additional information.

- List date of license or renewal:_____

❑ **The program employs qualified staff.**

- The CBEC must employ one or more staff members that hold one of the following teaching licenses issued by the Iowa Bureau of Practitioner Preparation and Licensure.
  PreK-K classroom teaching license
  PreK-3rd grade classroom teaching license
  Early childhood special education teaching license

- If an AEA or LEA determines that a CBEC meets the standards described in the Feasibility Review Process, but the CBEC does not employ a teacher holding one of the required licenses, an Adjusted Program Report may be filed. The APR is to be used only when other options have been explored, and no program meeting all requirements is available to meet the needs of the individual student requiring this program. (See *Appendix D.*)

❑ **Staff interact frequently with children showing affection, interest, and respect. A-1***

- Staff interact nonverbally by smiling, touching, holding.
- Staff talk with and listen to individual children during activities and routines (arriving/departing, eating).
- Staff actively seek meaningful conversation with children.

❑ **Staff treat children of all races, religions, family backgrounds, ability levels and cultures equally with respect and consideration. A-4a**

* The letters and numbers following some items indicate that those statements are excerpts from *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs* (1991). See manual for additional criteria.

❑ **Staff are available and responsive to children. A-2**

- Reassure crying toddlers.
- Listen to children with attention and respect.
- Respond to children's questions and requests.
- Staff are aware of the activities of the entire group even when dealing with a smaller group.
- Staff position themselves strategically and look up often from involvement.
- Staff spend time observing each child without interrupting an actively involved child.

❑ **Staff speak with children in a friendly, courteous manner. A-3a**

- Speak with individual children often.
- Staff include child in conversations: describe actions, experiences, and events, listen and respond to children's comments and suggestions.
- Speak with children at eye level. Call children by name.

❑ **Overall sound of group is pleasant most of the time. A-7**

- Happy laughter, excitement, busy activity, relaxed talking. Adult voices do not dominate.

❑ **Staff conduct smooth and unregimented transitions between activities. B-9**

- Children are told to get ready for transition ahead of time.
- Children are not always required to move as a group from one activity to another.
- The new activity is prepared before the transition from the completed activity to avoid waiting.

❑ **Children are generally comfortable, relaxed, and happy, and involved in play and other activities. A-8a**

❑ **The daily schedule provides a balance of activities in consideration of the child's total daily experience what happens before, during, and after the program-with attention to the following dimensions: B-4**

- All age groups play outdoors daily, weather permitting.
- The schedule provides for alternating periods of quiet and active play.
- More than one option for group activity (individual, small group, or large group) is available most of the day.
- A balance of large muscle/small muscle activities is provided in the daily schedule.
- A balance of child initiated/staff initiated activity is provided in the daily schedule.
- A balance of child initiated/staff initiated activity is provided while limiting the amount of time spent in large group, staff initiated activity.

- ❑ **The number of children in a group is limited in order to facilitate adult-child interaction and constructive activity among children. Groups of children may be age-determined or multi-age. F-1**

- ❑ **Enough staff members with the primary responsibility for working with children are available to provide frequent personal contact, meaningful learning activities, and supervision, and to offer immediate care as needed. F-2a**

- ❑ **Substitutes are provided to maintain staff-child ratio when regular staff are absent. F-2b**

- ❑ **Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are available for (rate only for age group being observed) B-5:**

  Infants
  - Simple, light weight, open-ended, easily washable toys such as containers, balls, pop-beads, nesting cups.
  - Rattles, squeak toys, action/reaction toys.
  - Cuddly toys.
  - Toys to mouth such as teethers, rings.
  - Pictures of real objects.
  - Crawling area with sturdy, stable furniture to pull up self.

  Toddlers
  - Push and pull toys.
  - Stacking toys, large wooden spools/beads/cubes.
  - Sturdy picture books, music.
  - Pounding bench, simple puzzles.
  - Play telephone, dolls, pretend toys.
  - Large paper, crayons.
  - Sturdy furniture to hold on to while walking.
  - Sand and water toys.

  Preschoolers B-5c
  - Active play equipment for climbing and balancing.
  - Unit blocks and accessories.
  - Puzzles, manipulative toys.
  - Picture books and records, musical instruments.
  - Art materials such as finger and tempera paints, crayons, scissors, paste.
  - Dramatic play materials such as dolls, dress-up clothes and props, child sized furniture, puppets.
  - Sand and water toys.

- ❑ **Accident protection and liability insurance coverage is maintained for children and adults. E-8a**

- ❑ **Vehicle insurance is maintained on any vehicle owned or leased by the facility and used to transport children. E-8b**

- ❑ **When children with disabilities are served, program is modified as needed, such as provision of special materials and equipment, use of supportive services, individualization of activity.**

    - Program enables child to use assistive technology devices and is willing to store equipment on-site when not in use.
    - Schedule is modified as needed; such as shorter day or alternative activities.

- ❑ **When children with disabilities are served, staff are aware of the identified special needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. B-3c**

- ❑ **When children with disabilities are served, therapy is developed appropriately and incorporated within classroom activities as much as possible, rather than removing the child from the classroom.**

- ❑ **When children with disabilities are served, individualized education programs are developed and implemented in a developmentally appropriate manner.**

    - IEP goals are incorporated within regular, meaningful classroom activities rather than focusing on isolated skill development.

- ❑ **Classroom space, doorways, bathrooms and sinks, as well as outdoor play space, are accessible and allow children who need a variety of assistive technology devices (wheelchairs, walkers, etc.) to participate in activities without being restricted.**

    - Indoor and outdoor space are free of abrupt changes in levels such as steps or curbs. In addition, surfaces are manageable for children to negotiate independently using assistive technology devices.
    - If the facility is not accessible, the program administrators are willing to consider making modifications to the environment, e.g., installing ramps, widening doorways.

- ❑ **Children with and without special needs are actively involved; the program allows for a variety of learning styles and provides equipment, materials and activities which are appropriate and challenging for children functioning at a wide range of developmental levels.**

    - Children with disabilities have opportunities to practice skills with nondisabled peers.

- ❑ **Children with disabilities are included in all activities and treated with respect and consideration.**
- ❑ **Policies and procedures specific to the provision of services defined in the IEP are included in a written contract between the program and AEA/LEA.**

- ❑ **Program administrator(s) are willing to discuss accommodations and modifications needed to meet the needs of the child, i.e., need for extra personnel, assistive technology devices, schedule adjustment.**

- ❑ **Staff keep information about children, family, and associates confidential. Staff refrain from commenting about children or families in the presence of other adults or children. E-12**

- ❑ **Program staff are willing to participate in ongoing staff development activities and consultation related to the special needs of children with disabilities.**

- ❑ **The program agrees to assignment of licensed special education professional(s) to monitor the IEP, implement instructional objectives and provide consultation to the program regarding the special education services required by the child with disabilities.**

- ❑ **All program staff are willing to participate in training to prepare staff to implement accommodations to be followed in an emergency.**

- ❑ **The program is willing to participate in the development and implementation of, a written plan for specific medical management and emergency care for the child with disabilities. Staff members have immediate access to written emergency care or medical management plans.**

- ❑ **A process exists for orienting children and parents to the program that may include a pre-enrollment visit, parent orientation meeting, or gradual introduction of children to the program. C-2**

- ❑ **Staff and parents communicate about child rearing practices in the home and at the program in order to minimize potential conflicts and confusion for children. 3-a**

- ❑ **Staff and parents communicate information about the child's special needs in both the program and home environment in order to facilitate smooth transition into the program.**

- ❑ **A verbal and/or written system is established for sharing day-to-day happenings that affect children. C-5a**
- ❑ **Changes in a child's physical or emotional state are reported to parents regularly. C-5b**

- ❑ **Parents are welcomed visitors in the program at all times (for example, to observe, eat lunch with a child, or volunteer to help in the classroom). C-4a**

- ❑ **Staff and parents communicate to ensure that children experience smooth transitions from one program to another during the day. C-8a**

- ❑ **Parents of children with disabilities are treated with the same respect as parents of nondisabled students, and are fully included in all aspects of the program.**

- ❑ **Parents and program staff will be included in staffings, IEP conferences, and annual reviews.**

    - Staff will be provided time to meet with special education personnel to plan and discuss the child's program.

LANGUAGE

- ❑ **Staff talk with individual children, and encourage children of all ages to use language. A-3b**

  - Examples: Talk about things toddlers see, help two-year-olds name things, ask preschoolers open-ended questions, provide opportunities for school-age children to talk about their day.

- ❑ **Staff members provide variety of developmentally appropriate hands-on activities to encourage language and literacy development. B-7d**

  Infants/younger toddlers:
  - Engage in many one-to-one, face-to-face interactions with infants.
  - Look at simple books and pictures.
  - Talk in a pleasant, calm voice, using simple language and frequent eye contact while being responsive to the infant's cues.
  - Verbally label objects and events within the infant's experience.
  - Respond to sounds infant makes, occasionally imitating infant's vocalization.
  - Describe children's and adult's actions and the events that occur in the child's environment.
  - Respond to toddler's attempts at language in supportive ways such as expanding their utterances and answering their questions, engaging in meaningful conversation about every day experience.

  Older toddlers/preschoolers:
  - Read books and poems, tell stories about experiences, talk about pictures, write down experience stories children dictate.
  - Provide time for conversation, ask child questions that require more than a one-word answer.
  - Answer children's questions.
  - Add more information to what child says.
  - Label things in room, use written words with pictures and spoken language, provide a print rich environment.
  - Use flannel board, puppets, songs, finger plays.
  - Encourage children's emerging interest in writing (scribbling, drawing, copying, and inventing own spelling).

- ❑ **Staff provide many opportunities for communication, either verbally or through alternative communication systems if needed. Staff are willing to become familiar with each child's communication system and learn to sign if needed.**

  - Examples: Direct visual contact with peers and staff members is promoted for children who have hearing loss. Gestures and other nonverbal communication are accepted as valid forms of communication. Peers are encouraged to initiate and respond to children using alternative communication systems.

SELF-HELP

❑ **Staff encourage independence in children as they are ready. A-5**

- Examples: Finger feeding self, washing hands, selecting own toys, dressing, and picking up toys.

❑ **Staff are willing to make specifically defined accommodations to assist children in meeting self-help goals.**

BEHAVIOR/SOCIAL

❑ **Staff use positive approaches to help children behave constructively. A-6a**

Guidance methods include:
- Redirection.
- Planning ahead to prevent problems.
- Encouragement of appropriate behavior.
- Consistent, clear rules developed in conjunction with children and discussed with them to make sure they understand.
- Staff describe the situation to encourage children's evaluation of the problem rather than impose the solution.
- Logical or natural consequences applied in problem situations.

❑ **Staff help children deal with anger, sadness, and frustration by comforting, identifying, reflecting feelings, and helping children use words to solve their problems. A-8b**

❑ **Staff encourage pro-social behaviors in children such as cooperating, helping, taking turns, talking to solve problems. A-9**

- Examples: Adults model the desired behaviors. Adults identify, describe, and offer strategies to develop pro-social behaviors. Adults initiate opportunities for exploring and valuing similarities and differences.

❑ **Staff expectations of children's social behavior are developmentally appropriate. A-10**

- Examples: Two pieces of the same equipment are available so toddlers are not forced to share too often. Preschoolers are encouraged to cooperate in small groups.

❑ **Children are encouraged to talk about feelings and ideas instead of solving problems with force. A-11**

- Examples: Adults supply appropriate words for infants and toddlers to help them learn ways to get along in a group. Adults intervene quickly when children's responses to each other become physical and discuss the inappropriateness of such responses. Adults discuss alternative solutions with children 2 years and older.

❑ **Staff provide a variety of developmentally appropriate hands-on activities for children to develop social skills. B-7b**

Infants/younger toddlers:
- Hold, pat, and touch babies.
- Talk to, sing to, and play with each baby on a one-to-one basis.
- Respond to and expand on cues coming from child.
- Interpret infants' actions to other children to help them get along in the group. ("Mary had it first.")

Older toddlers/preschoolers:
Assist toddlers in social interaction.
Create space and time for small groups of children to build blocks together or enjoy dramatic play.
Provide opportunities for sharing, caring, and helping, such as making cards for a sick child or caring for pets.
Explore ways to respond to biased comments and behaviors.

MOTOR

❑ **Staff provide a variety of developmentally appropriate hands-on activities to enhance physical development. B-7e**

Infants/younger toddlers:
- Allow infant's self-initiated motor development such as rolling, sitting, walking at their own pace.
- Provide open carpeted space as well as hard surfaces such as wood floors for crawling.
- Provide low sturdy furniture for child to pull up self or hold on to while walking.
- Provide accessible outdoor activities for infants.
- Provide simple objects infants may reach for and grasp.
- Allow nonmobile infants to move and breathe comfortably, lying freely on their backs while looking about, kicking, reaching, practicing eye-hand coordination.
- Allow mobile infants to move about freely, play with and explore a safe environment.
- Provide time, space, and objects (ramps, platforms, low steps) for toddlers' active play such as sitting, walking, climbing, jumping.
- Provide toddlers objects for carrying such as baskets, large empty plastic bottles, balls.
- Provide toddlers simple puzzles, nesting toys, stacking toys, pop-beads, balls.

Older toddlers/preschoolers
- Provide time and space for active play such as jumping, running, balancing, climbing, riding tricycles.
- Provide creative movement activity using obstacle course or activity songs and records.
- Provide fine-motor activities such as stacking rings, pop-beads, pegboards, and puzzles for toddlers; add lacing cards and woodworking for preschoolers.

COGNITIVE

❑ **Staff provide a variety of developmentally appropriate hands-on activities for children to encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment. B-7c**

Infants/younger toddlers:
- Provide an appropriately challenging safe environment for infants and toddlers to explore and manipulate.
- Provide light colorful objects for babies to look at which they can reach for or grasp.
- Play naming and hiding games such as peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake.
- Provide simple toys that respond to infant's initiations so they may pay attention to cause and effect.
- Provide large containers full of objects for toddlers to carry, dump and refill.
- Help toddler's developing awareness by reflecting their experiences. ("You're pointing to the street; is it because you hear the garbage truck?")
- Provide opportunities for making choices without interfering with selections.
- Avoid interruptions of children's activities.

Older toddlers/preschoolers
- Plan activities for labeling, classifying, sorting objects by shape, color, size.
- Discuss daily and weekly routines in terms of time concepts, season of the year.
- Extend children's thinking and learning during activities by adding new materials, asking open-ended questions, offering ideas or suggestions, joining in their play and providing assistance in solving problems.
- Observe natural events such as seeds growing, life cycle of pets.
- Create opportunities to use numbers, counting objects.
- Take walks around building or neighborhood.
- Plan trips to provide new learning experiences for preschoolers.
- Encourage water and sand play.

❑ **Staff provide activities that encourage child to problem-solve. Ask questions that require the child to give reasons for inferences, make predictions about future or hypothetical events, and describe possible causes. Provide opportunities for the child to follow directions throughout the daily activities and routines.**

APPENDIX D

USE OF ADJUSTED PROGRAM REPORTS FOR SERVING PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN COMMUNITY-BASED EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS

Currently, the Iowa *Rules of Special Education* define conditions for placing children requiring special education in preschool programs for nondisabled children. Some provisions of these rules may be excepted through the adjusted program report (APR) process to allow for integration into community-based settings. Following are examples of adjustments in §41.17(7)(a through g) which may be necessary in order to provide appropriate programs for children in the least restrictive environment.

Children identified with needs that could best be met in community-based preschools must have individualized education program (IEP) goals and objectives relating to disability specific needs which are initiated, monitored, and the students progress evaluated by qualified ECSE personnel.

If the IEP team determines that a child has needs that could best be met in a community-based preschool center for all or a portion of the child's special education program, an adjusted program report may be used as documentation of the specific need of the child and how it will be addressed through the IEP. The student's progress on special education goals and objectives on the IEP shall be monitored on a frequent basis by an AEA or local district staff person who holds licensure in early childhood special education.

The Rules of Special Education §41.17(7)(a) through (g)

Preschool handicapped in programs for nonhandicapped. A preschool handicapped pupil may be placed in a licensed preschool program for nonhandicapped pupils, provided that all of the following are met:

a. *The pupil is also enrolled in a home instruction or center-based program in addition to placement in a preschool for nonhandicapped children*

   [APR: Indicate a **program model** modification and outline the deviation from the Rules.]

b. *The pupil's special education needs are of a unique nature and cannot be met in any other special education alternative for preschool handicapped pupils.*

   [APR: The IEP must include present levels of educational performance, goals, objectives, and an integration plan that reflects the need for special education services in an integrated setting.]

c. *Appropriate special education support services are provided in accord with the pupil's needs.*

   [No exception appropriate.]

d. *The length of any placement is for one academic year or less.*

[APR: At the time of the annual review the placement should be reviewed, as for any other special education service. If the IEP team determines that an additional year of programming in the community setting is appropriate, the IEP can be written to include the integrated option. A new APR should be submitted for each year.]

e. *The director has approved the IEP and a procedure for ongoing evaluation.*

[No exception appropriate.]

f. *The preschool teacher serving the handicapped pupil is certified as a prekindergarten-kindergarten teacher by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners.*

[APR: The special education personnel assigned to assure implementation and monitoring of the specific goals and objective to be addressed in the community-based setting are considered to be the certified personnel implementing the special education intervention(s). Licensed early childhood special education personnel should make the determination as to the likelihood of the recommended environment being able to meet the special education needs of the child.]

g. *An appropriate special education representative from the AEA or LEA is assigned to each pupil to monitor the pupil's progress through regularly scheduled on site visits.*

[No exception appropriate.]

Following are suggested components for the completion of an APR which is requesting a different program model for delivery of services for early childhood special education than is currently available in § 47.17(7) (a) through (g).

The need for an adjusted program report is based on: **program model.**

Following are suggestions to include or consider when indicating the justification for the adjusted ECSE program model:

1. student's present levels of performance.
2. describe disability, delay or special needs of the student.
3. the specific goals (relating to the child's disability) which can most appropriately be addressed in the community-based preschool setting and recommended by the IEP team.
4. specify the name or position of the licensed ECSE staff person who will assist with the implementation of the specific **IEP** goals and will regularly monitor the IEP.

Clarification of Issues Specific to Utilization of the APR

The APR is **not** needed for community-based preschool placements if all criteria is met as outlined in §41.17(7)(a) through (g).

Either weighted or federal **funds** may be utilized for payment of tuition or transportation costs for students for whom community-based options are the recommended option for addressing special education specific goals and objectives.

APPENDIX E

RELATED PUBLICATIONS
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
(515/281-3176)

Bureau of Special Education Publications

Hansen, D. (1991). *Least Restrictive Environment: Considerations for Early Childhood Special Education*. Des Moines: Iowa Early Childhood Special Education Technical Assistance Network, Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education.

Hansen, D., Amaroso, M., Burke, D., Verhusen-Langerud, K., Lewis, L., Kastle, K., & Price, P. (1993). *A Planning Guide for Integrating Young Children with Disabilities into Community-Based Early Childhood Programs*. Des Moines: Iowa Early Childhood Special Education Technical Assistance Network, Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education.

Least Restrictive Environment. An Annotated Bibliography. Early childhood special education materials and publications available for short-term loan from the Iowa Early Childhood Special Education Technical Assistance Network. Des Moines: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education.

Publications Suggested for Purchase

Smith, B. & Rose, D. (1993). *Administrator's Policy Handbook for Preschool Mainstreaming*. Cambridge MA: Brookline Books: PO Box 1046, Cambridge, MA 02238. ISBN 0-914797-80-8, $39.95.

Division of Early Childhood Recommended Practices: Indicators of Quality in Programs for Infants and Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families. (1993). Division of Early Childhood: Council For Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA, 22091-1589. ISBN 0-86586-234-6, $20.00 (non-members), $14.00 (DEC members).